



What's Happening in Houston's Theater District

May 2010

THE QUEEN OF SPADES

April 16 – May 1 (Times vary)

Houston Grand Opera

One man's obsession with a lucky card trick turns the fates of three in Tchaikovsky's vibrant melodrama. Russian tenor Vladimir Galouzine returns to HGO as the tormented Hermann, internationally renowned soprano Tatiana Monogarova makes her HGO debut as his beloved Lisa, and Vasily Ladyuk is the dashing Prince Yeletsky. Canadian mezzo-soprano Judith Forst is the keeper of the fated secret. This award-winning production is a visual treat with imaginative puppets and mixed-period costumes. Italian maestro Carlo Rizzi conducts.

Performance Timing: 3 hours, 20 minutes including 2 intermissions

Wortham Center's Brown Theater

Tickets: \$23 - \$200

(713) 228-6737 / houstongrandopera.org

HARVEY

April 16 – May 9 (Times vary)

Alley Theatre

Affable Elwood P. Dowd has a kind word for everyone he meets. He lives a quiet life with his social-climbing sister and her daughter and is devoted to his loyal and trustworthy friend and constant companion, Harvey. The fact that Harvey happens to be a six-foot invisible rabbit doesn't seem to bother Elwood but is an ongoing embarrassment to his family who decides to have him committed. In this Pulitzer Prize-winning comedy, the medical establishment is turned topsy-turvy as Elwood and Harvey cause pandemonium. *Recommended for general audiences.*

Hubbard Stage

Tickets: \$21 - \$70

(713) 220-5700 / alleytheatre.org

PINK MARTINI

April 30 – May 2 (Times vary)

Houston Symphony

Pink Martini returns to delight you with their refreshing blend of classical, jazz, Latin and Parisian cabaret music. Always fun and fresh, Pink Martini will perform a new set of songs you're sure to love.

Jones Hall

Tickets: \$29 - \$122

(713) 224-7575 / houstonsymphony.org

XERXES

April 30 – May 2 (Times vary)

Houston Grand Opera

One of Handel's most popular operas, Xerxes is a feast for the ears, and the eyes in this classic eighteenth-century production. A mad entanglement of love stories, the opera follows the tyrannical and flamboyant Xerxes (Susan Graham) in his quest for Romilda (Laura Claycomb), who is beloved by his very own brother Arsamene, sung by David Daniels. Contralto Sonia Prina, soprano Heidi Stober and baritone Philip Cutlip round out the all-star cast. The award-winning production is set in an English pleasure garden—the perfect place for an elaborate lovers' chase!

Performance Timing: 3 hours, 35 minutes including 2 intermissions

Wortham Center's Brown Theater

Tickets: \$23 - \$200

(713) 228-6737 / houstongrandopera.org

CARNIVAL OF THE ANIMALS

May 1 (10:00 am & 11:30 am)

Houston Symphony

The Houston Symphony celebrates the underdog of the animal kingdom: the Chicken! From Mussorgsky's Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks to the Funky Chicken Dance, children will learn new respect for our fine feathered friend. Other creatures join the party in Saint-Saëns classic Carnival of the Animals.

Jones Hall

Tickets: \$12 - \$19

(713) 224-7575 / houstonsymphony.org

THE TWILIGHT OF ROMANTICISM

May 1 (8:00 pm)

Da Camera of Houston

Da Camera welcomes back the brilliant Orion String Quartet and proudly presents soprano Kelley Nassief in her Da Camera debut for an evening of works on the cusp between Romantic and modern. The seminal compositions of Richard Wagner and Johannes Brahms, viewed as musical opposites in their own time, each provided irreplaceable inspiration for the young Arnold Schoenberg. Both influences are heard in the passionate and fiery Chamber Symphony, for which pianist Sarah Rothenberg joins the quartet. Of the Wesendonck Lieder, Wagner wrote, "I have done nothing better than these songs."

Wortham Center's Cullen Theater

Tickets: \$25 - \$45

(713) 524-5050 / dacamera.com

TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA

May 1 (8:00 pm)

Verizon Wireless Theater

Tickets: \$48.50 - \$58.50

(713) 230-1600 / livenation.com

OSCAR CASARES AND GWENDOLYN ZEPEDA

May 3 (7:30 pm)

Inprint

OSCAR CASARES was raised in Brownsville and is a life-long resident of Texas, where his collection of short stories, Brownsville: Stories and now his first novel, Amigoland, are set. Marilynne Robinson describes Casares' fiction as "clear-eyed and fresh, full of sweet gravity and pensive humor." Publishers Weekly says that Casares' stories, "probing underneath the surface of Tex-Mex culture, with their wisecracking, temperamental, obsessive middle-aged men and their dramas straight from neighborhood gossip, are in the direct line of descent from Mark Twain and Ring Lardner." Casares is the recipient of a 2006 National Endowment for the Arts fellowship and now teaches creative writing at the University of Texas in Austin, where he lives with his wife and young son.

GWENDOLYN ZEPEDA, a native Houstonian, is the author of the story collection, To the Last Man I Slept with and All the Jerks Just Like Him, and the debut novel, Houston, We Have a Problema, as well as the popular blog, gwenworld.com. The San Antonio Current says of Zepeda's story collection that it is a "brutally candid, laugh-out-loud, feminist, barrio manifesto that sometimes reads like suggestive science fiction cross-pollinated with Tess of the d'Urbervilles." Booklist says of her most recent work, "the vibrant Houston setting and the novel's emphasis on Tex-Mex culture, art, and folklore add unusual and alluring touches to this debut novel." Zepeda will read from her new novel, Lone Star Legend, also set in Texas, which follows aspiring journalist Sandy Saavedra in her efforts to combat Latino stereotypes. Zepeda also writes children's books for Arte Público Press.

Alley Theatre's Hubbard Stage

Tickets: \$5 (On sale April 12)

(713) 521-2026 / inprinthouston.org

A LITTLE DAY MUSIC

May 5 (Noon)

Da Camera of Houston

A Little Day Music concerts fulfill an important aspect of Da Camera's mission to develop the audience for chamber music and jazz by making it accessible to everyone and part of everyday life. Downtown workers, schools, seniors and day care centers are among the many who enjoy Da Camera's free lunchtime concerts on the first Wednesday of each month, October through May, at noon in the lobby of the Wortham Theater Center. Bring your lunch and enjoy the wide variety of artists and ensembles presented this season. The May concert features the Da Camera of Houston Young Artists.

Wortham Center's Grand Foyer

Tickets: Free

(713) 524-5050 / dacamera.com

MIXED REP

May 6-8 (Times vary)

Dominic Walsh Dance Theater

This spring mixed repertoire program offers an escape to Europe without leaving the city limits. We bring the choreographer of Czech artist Vaclav Kunes to Houston for the first time with the U.S. premiere of his Small Hour, along with revivals of Italian choreographer Mauro Bigonzetti's provocative Pression and Walsh's mysterious, yet whimsical I Napoletani which will leave you smiling and craving pizza!

Hobby Center's Zilkha Hall

Tickets: \$24.25 - \$51.25

(713) 315-2525 / dwdt.org

STRAIGHT NO CHASER

May 7 (8:00 pm)

Verizon Wireless Theater

Tickets: \$25

(713) 230-1600 / livenation.com

HANDEL'S WATER MUSIC

May 7-9 (Times vary)

Houston Symphony

Handel overlaid earthy folk songs, hornpipes and country dances with a delectably sophisticated style that charms the ear and mind.

Jones Hall

Tickets: \$29 - \$116

(713) 224-7575 / houstonsymphony.org

SECOND SATURDAY BOAT CRUISE

May 8 (10:00 am)

Buffalo Bayou Partnership

These 30-minute boat rides are a great way to spend the afternoon with your family. Escape from the city and enjoy the cool breeze as you glide along the bayou's waters. Look for graceful herons, jumping fish, and even the occasional alligator sunning on the bayou's banks. After your cruise, enjoy a picnic lunch on the Sabine Promenade grounds.

No reservations necessary (20 person capacity per trip). Boat picks up at Sabine Street Bridge North Boat Landing. Children under 4 are not permitted.

Sabine Promenade

Tickets: \$5 - \$7 (cash only)

(713) 752-0314 / buffalobayou.org

MOZART'S JUPITER SYMPHONY

May 13-16 (Times vary)

Houston Symphony

Graf has recorded all the Mozart symphonies. In the Jupiter, you'll hear him conduct Mozart's last, crowning symphony with its glorious fugal finale.

Jones Hall

Tickets: \$29 - \$116

(713) 224-7575 / houstonsymphony.org

JANE EYRE

May 14-23 (Times vary)

Masquerade Theatre

The elegant and beautiful story of the governess whose faith, will and perseverance overcomes all of her earthly faults and failings and instills in her a quiet courage that makes her "brave enough for love" returns to Masquerade in a new and improved fashion - allowing us to stage the Houston Premiere of Jane Eyre for the second time! Enjoy again the timeless story of plain Jane Eyre's growth from orphaned student at the Lowood School to governess for the ward of the enigmatic and passionate Edward Fairfax Rochester, and the all-consuming love that grows like a fire between the two. An all-new script and score by Paul Gordon (Emma, The Front) and John Caird (Children of Eden, Les Misérables) featuring new dialogue and songs as well as retaining favorites like "Sweet Liberty", "My Secret Soul", "The Finer Things" and "Brave Enough For Love" will stir your senses and lift your heart to the very highest heights!

Hobby Center's Zilkha Hall

Tickets: \$36.25 - \$66.25

(713) 315-2525 / masqueradetheatre.com

CLASSICAL IN THE RAW

May 15 (8:00 pm)

Mercury Baroque

For the season finale, Mercury broadens into the classical repertoire with a refreshing take on Mozart's 40th Symphony and Beethoven's 1st Symphony. These symphonies represent the peak of an era –the finale of Mozart's career and the brilliant beginning of Beethoven's. They are the perfect finale to an exciting season. Hear the symphonies as they were meant to be performed with period correct instruments and with the crispness and energy that they were intended to have.

Wortham Center's Cullen Theater

Tickets: \$20 - \$47

(713) 533-0080 / mercurybaroque.org

CELEBRATION OF UNITY

May 16 (5:00 pm)

Texas Medical Center Orchestra

The season finale celebrates 10 years of unity in TMCO. To make beautiful music together, in harmony, requires a unity of purpose and a union of souls, with every member of the orchestra committed to that goal

Carmina Burana demands the orchestra merge with a multi generation, interdisciplinary synergy of souls from the adult and children's choirs to dueling pianos and vocal soloists bringing together four generations of musicians, in a celebration of unity in music making

Wortham Center's Brown Theater

Tickets: \$10 - \$20

tmcorchestra.org

RITE OF SPRING AND "RACH 3"

May 21-23 (Times vary)

Houston Symphony

Stravinsky plunges you into brutal excitement through pulsing, ritualistic repetition. Jones Hall

Tickets: \$29 - \$116

(713) 224-7575 / houstonsymphony.org

INTELLIGENCE-SLAVE

May 21 – June 20 (Times vary)

Alley Theatre

Kenneth Lin's new play, Intelligence-Slave, tells the story of Curt Herzstark, a concentration camp prisoner who was kept alive by the Nazis because he was rumored to have invented the world's first hand-held four function calculator – a great prize if it could be re-created. Caught between the thrill of technological discovery and the fear of rendering himself obsolete if he produces a working device, Curt's survival plan takes a turn when the Nazis introduce him to a wunderkind member of the Hitler Youth with a soul that might be salvageable. *Recommended for mature audiences due to subject matter.*

Neuhaus Stage

Tickets: \$40 - \$55

(713) 220-5700 / alleytheatre.org

LIVE AFTER FIVE

May 21 (5:00 pm)

Across the Board Entertainment

Entertainment TBA

Jones Plaza

Tickets: Free

KMJQ.com

YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN

May 25 – June 6 (Times vary)

Broadway Across America

The classic Mel Brooks movie is ALIVE...and it's headed here! You'll have a monstrously good time at this spectacular new production, winner of the 2008 Outer Critics Circle Award.

Don't miss the sensational cast delivering all your favorite moments from the classic film, plus brand-new show-stopping numbers for the stage, including "Transylvania Mania," "He Was My Boyfriend" and "Puttin' on the Ritz."

This wickedly inspired re-imagining of the Frankenstein legend follows bright young Dr. Frankenstein (that's Fronkensteen) as he attempts to create a monster--but not without scary and hilarious complications. The brains behind the laughter is mad genius and three- time Tony® winner Mel Brooks himself--who wrote the music and lyrics and co-wrote the book- along with his record-breaking team from The Producers: five-time Tony-winning director and choreographer Susan Stroman and three-time Tony-winning writer, Thomas Meehan.

Hobby Center's Sarofim Hall

Tickets: \$26 - \$75

(800) 745-3000 / broadwayacrossamerica.com

PECOS

May 27 – June 6 (Times vary)

Houston Ballet

Created by the legendary George Balanchine for New York City Ballet in 1978, Ballo della Regina is a virtuoso set of variations, comparable to the bel canto style of opera, set to ballet music that was cut from the original production of Verdi's Don Carlos. Set to a specially commissioned score by Matthew Pierce, Stanton Welch's vibrantly theatrical Pecos Bill dramatizes the poignant romance between the legendary Texas hero Pecos Bill and the gutsy tomboy Sluefoot Sue. Modern dance legend Mark Morris's Sandpaper Ballet contains the hallmarks of his work: wit, humor, and dazzlingly inventive movement, along with whimsical green and white costumes by noted fashion designer Isaac Mizrahi.

Wortham Center's Brown Theater

Tickets: \$35 - \$160

(713) 227-ARTS / houstonballet.org

CIRQUE DU SYMPHONY

May 28-30 (Times vary)

Houston Symphony

Bigger and better than ever! Experience this exhilarating marriage of symphonic music to artistry, balance and strength. The Houston Symphony breathes musical life into every move of world-famous performers. Listen while you see soaring aerial artists, unbelievable strongmen, a hand balancer - and the Spanish Web!

Jones Hall

Tickets: \$29 - \$122

(713) 224-7575 / houstonsymphony.org

THE CURT MILLER MAGIC & COMEDY SHOW

May 28-29 (Times vary)

Magic! Comedy! Las Vegas Illusions! Don't miss "The Curt Miller Magic & Comedy Show," the biggest magic show to hit Houston since David Copperfield way back in 1998. You'll see people floating, sawed in half, and even vanished right before your eyes! Curt Miller blends dazzling magic with great CLEAN comedy in a theatrical show that will leave you amazed, amused, and most of all, entertained. You might even get chosen to be a part of the show! Don't miss your chance to see a Las Vegas-style magic show right here in Houston. Three shows only, May 28-29. Suitable for all ages.

Hobby Center's Zilkha Hall

Tickets: \$39.25 - \$49.25

(713) 315-2525 / thehobbycenter.org OR magiccomedyshow.com

